

SIDE 9; Mother, Paul

56

BAREFOOT IN THE PARK

ACT II

way and PAUL struggles in through the door carrying the MOTHER in his arms. From PAUL's staggering we'd guess that the MOTHER must now weigh about two thousand pounds. He makes it to the sofa, where he drops her, and then in utter exhaustion sinks to the floor below her. They BOTH stare unseeing, and suck desperately for air. CORIE and VELASCO emerge from the kitchen with VELASCO carrying a coffee pot.)

CORIE. (Crosses to MOTHER.) Forgot the stove doesn't work. Upstairs everyone . . . for coffee. (CORIE pulls MOTHER's coat but there is no reaction from MOTHER or PAUL.) Don't you want coffee?

(PAUL and MOTHER shake their heads, "No.")

VELASCO. (Going to door.) They'll drink it if we make it . . .

CORIE. (Following him.) Don't you two go away . . .

(CORIE and VELASCO exit with BOTH joining in "Shama, Shama." PAUL and MOTHER stare silently ahead. They appear to be in shock, having gone through some terrible ordeal.)

START

MOTHER. (Finally.) I feel like we've died . . . and gone to heaven . . . only we had to climb up . . .

PAUL. (Gathering his strength.) Struck down in the prime of life . . .

MOTHER. I don't really feel sick . . . Just kind of numb . . . and I can't make a fist . . . (She holds up a stiff hand.)

PAUL. You want to hear something frightening? . . . My teeth feel soft . . . It's funny . . . but the best thing we had all night was the knichi.

MOTHER. Anyway, Corie had a good time . . . Don't you think Corie had a good time, Paul?

PAUL. (Struggling up onto couch L. of MOTHER.) Wonderful . . . Poor kid . . . It isn't often we get out to Staten Island in February.

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MOTHER. She seems to get such a terrific kick out of living. You've got to admire that, don't you, Paul?

PAUL. I admire anyone who has three portions of poofla-poo pie.

MOTHER. (Starts.) What's poofla-poo pie?

PAUL. Don't you remember? That gook that came in a turban.

MOTHER. I thought that was the waiter . . . I tried, Paul. But I just couldn't seem to work up an appetite the way they did.

PAUL. (Reassuring her.) No, no, Mom . . . You mustn't blame yourself . . . We're just not used to that kind of food . . . You just don't pick up your fork and dig into a brown salad . . . You've got to play around with it for a while.

MOTHER. Maybe I am getting old . . . I don't mind telling you it's very discouraging . . . (With great difficulty, she manages to rouse herself and get up from the couch.) Anyway, I don't think I could get through coffee . . . I'm all out of pink pills . . .

PAUL. Where are you going?

MOTHER. Home . . . I want to die in my own bed. (Exhausted, she sinks into chair.)

PAUL. Well, what'll I tell them?

MOTHER. Oh, make up some clever little lie. (Rolls herself, gets up.) Tell Corie I'm not really her mother. She'll probably never want to see me again anyway . . . Good night, dear. Just as MOTHER gets to the door, it

opens and CORIE and VELASCO return. Oh, coffee ready? (She turns back into the room. VELASCO crosses to the bar, as CORIE moves above the couch.)

CORIE. I was whistling the Armenian National Anthem and I blew out the pilot light.

VELASCO. (Puts four brandy snifters he has brought in down on bar and, taking decanter from bar, begins to pour brandy.) Instead we're going to have flaming brandy . . . Corie, give everyone a match.

(CORIE moves to side table.)

END